

August 27th Readings

[DEUTERONOMY 11:1-12:32](#)

[LUKE 8:22-39](#)

[PSALM 70:1-5](#)

[PROVERBS 12:4](#)

Luke 8:22-25 is a story of Jesus and his disciples sailing across the Sea of Galilee. As they were sailing, a sudden, violent storm came down on the sea. The Sea of Galilee is approximately 13 miles long, 8.1 miles wide, 680 feet below sea level, and surrounded by hills. It is also considered shallow, approximately 200 feet deep, compared to Lake Superior at 1,332 feet. Because of the altitude differences and shallowness of the sea, winds funnel through the hills and whip up the waters of the sea. Storms come up quickly and without warning.

Much like the squalls on Galilee, storms of life often hit us quickly and without warning. Things can happen in the blink of an eye and be very overwhelming. When our life storms come at us are we overwhelmed and scared or do we believe Jesus can calm our fears like he did that day? Is our faith so shallow that we are quickly overwhelmed by life, or is it deep enough to know where to look for peace?

Years ago Jesus calmed the storm on the sea as suddenly as it came up. As Christians we can be certain that life happens. We can be just as certain that God can command our winds and waves to be still and, because of Him, we can have peace.

August 28th Readings

[DEUTERONOMY 13:1-15:23](#)

[LUKE 8:40-9:6](#)

[PSALM 71:1-24](#)

[PROVERBS 12:5-7](#)

When I was growing up, we had the Summer Youth Series. On Tuesday afternoons, the youth group would meet in the parking lot, pile into the old church van, and head to one of the area towns for youth devos. We loved singing "Devo Songs." Basically, songs we sang every week, but weren't in our church's song books back then.

One song I loved is “Pierce My Ear” by Steve Croft. The words are “Pierce my ear, o Lord my God. Take me to your door this day. For I will serve no other god, Lord I’m here to stay. For you have paid the price for me, with your blood you ransomed me. And I will serve you eternally. A free man I’ll never be.”

This song comes from Deuteronomy 15. In 16 and 17, God tells the Israelites that if a servant doesn’t want to leave them, they were to take an awl and push it through the servant’s ear lobe, into the door, indicating that he was choosing to be their servant for life. Are we satisfied with the life God is giving us? If so, let’s choose to open the door for Him – not to pierce our ears, but our hearts.

August 29th Readings

[DEUTERONOMY 16:1-17:20](#)

[LUKE 9:7-27](#)

[PSALM 72:1-20](#)

[PROVERBS 12:8-9](#)

One day, Jesus tried to slip away with his disciples, but as usual, a crowd of people found them. Jesus welcomed the crowd, taught them, and even healed the sick. According to Luke 9:12 it was late in the afternoon when the disciples asked Jesus to send the crowd away to find food and lodging, but Jesus told the disciples to feed the people themselves. In my mind, I can just see the shocked faces of the men as they cried, “But Jesus, we only have 5 rolls and 2 sardines! We don’t have money to buy enough food. There are over 5,000 people here!” I also wonder if Jesus rolled his eyes and sighed at this point. The disciples had already seen him heal the sick, cast out demons, calm a storm, and even raise people from the dead. Didn’t they believe he could feed these people? Not only did Jesus feed everyone until they were full, there were 12 baskets of leftovers – 1 basket for each disciple.

Sometimes our problems may seem too big and our resources too small. But if you willingly give both to God, he will help you and bless you abundantly.

August 30th Readings

[DEUTERONOMY 18:1-20:20](#)

[LUKE 9:28-50](#)

[PSALM 73:1-28](#)

[PROVERBS 12:10](#)

As I read Psalm 73, verse 3 caught my attention. “For I envied the proud when I saw them prosper despite their wickedness.” As I thought about this several things came to mind: First, I do not think that every successful person is wicked and, second, God blesses us all differently. Success is not always defined as fame and fortune. Then, I was struck by another realization, the power of envy. Satan loves to use envy as a weapon on us, especially during our own tough times. It can be tempting to be envious of someone who can buy big houses and fancy cars. Additionally, it can be difficult to understand why they don’t seem to have any problems when they don’t live Godly lives. Thankfully, these conflicts were eased when I read verse 17, “Then I went into your sanctuary, O God, and I finally understood the destiny of the wicked.” and the first part of verse 19, “In an instant they are destroyed.”

We should be good stewards of all blessings God has given us, but we should not place these things above God. Jesus said, “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” (Matthew 6:12)

We should be on guard against envy because it can make a heart bitter. Instead, let’s turn to God with a grateful heart and thank him for what we do have.

August 31st Readings

[DEUTERONOMY 21:1-22:30](#)

[LUKE 9:51-10:12](#)

[PSALM 74:1-23](#)

[PROVERBS 12:11](#)

The book of Deuteronomy is filled with the rules and laws from God that were given to the Israelites through Moses. Deuteronomy 21:22-23 states that if someone is executed and hung on a tree, the body must not remain on the tree overnight because the person is cursed in the sight of God and then it defiles the land given to them by God.

Those verses stood out to me because all of my life I have heard Acts 10:39, where Peter, talking about Jesus, says the Jews in Jerusalem “killed him by hanging him on a tree.” Our sin separated us from God and caused us to be cursed. But Jesus took on our sin and was hung on a tree in our place. When we are baptized for forgiveness of our sins, Jesus’ sacrifice covers our sin so that we are no longer cursed by God. Instead, we are forgiven. Thank you Jesus for making the ultimate sacrifice for me!

September 1st Readings

[DEUTERONOMY 23:1-25:19](#)

[LUKE 10:13-37](#)

[PSALM 75:1-10](#)

[PROVERBS 12:12-14](#)

In Luke 10, a man who was “an expert in the law” asked Jesus what he should do to inherit eternal life. When Jesus asked “the expert” what he thought, he answered by quoting Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18. The man followed-up with, “Who is my neighbor?” Jesus answered him through the Parable of the Good Samaritan. Let me paraphrase it. A Jewish man was beaten and robbed. Two Jewish leaders came by, saw him, but quickly crossed the street and passed by. Then a Samaritan came along. Even though Jews and Samaritans did not associate together, he showed compassion and kindness and helped the man.

The world is filled with people who have different views in politics, morals, and religion. But are these people my neighbors? Of course! Jesus came to earth for everyone. He even prayed for God to forgive the Roman soldiers who crucified him.

Before we create superficial barriers that might tempt us to “cross to the other side of the church” rather than assist people who differ from us, let’s remember that Jesus commanded us to love our neighbors as ourselves. Let’s be careful to not refuse to pray for someone because they voted for “that” person, committed “that” sin, or go to “that” church because Jesus taught, “love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you”. Let’s show kindness, love, compassion, and forgiveness to help lead others to Christ.

September 2nd Readings

[DEUTERONOMY 26:1-27:26](#)

[LUKE 10:38-11:13](#)

[PSALM 76:1-12](#)

[PROVERBS 12:15-17](#)

“Fools think their own way is right, but the wise listen to others.” Proverbs 12:15. A fool is a person who acts unwisely. Solomon is telling us that an unwise person will depend only on his decisions or what he thinks is right. However, a person who listens to others advice and counsel is wise.

Being willing to learn from others is valuable in all aspects of our lives, but it is especially beneficial when it comes to Bible study. This type of wisdom was manifested by the people of Berea. Acts 17:11 says, “And the people of Berea were more open-minded than those in Thessalonica, and they listened eagerly to Paul’s message. They searched the Scriptures day after day to see if Paul and Silas were teaching the truth.” Yes, we need to study on our own and form our own conclusions, but we can also benefit by listening to the viewpoints of others and having discussions with them. Then we are to prayerfully dive back into the Word and study more.

Let us be wise to listen to advice from others and to be like the people of Berea to follow up with God’s word. As the wise king observed, “As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.” (Acts 27:17)